

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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TAGS: PFOR PINT KS

SUBJECT: STUDENTS DEFY COURT

REF: SEOUL 8976, 8703

1. FOR THE SECOND TIME, A GROUP OF TWENTY-TWO STUDENTS FROM SEVERAL SEOUL UNIVERSITIES ON TRIAL FOR VIOLATION OF EMERGENCY MEASURE NINE DEFIED THE RIGHT OF THE COURT TO TRY THEM AND MADE STATEMENTS DENOUNCING THE YUSHIN CONSTITUTION AND EMERGENCY MEASURE NUMBER NINE. BECAUSE OF THE STUDENTS' DEFIANCE, THE JUDGE ABRUPTLY ADJOURNED THE SESSION.

2. ON NOVEMBER 10, THE FIRST SESSION OF THE EM-9 TRIAL OF THE MYONDONG GROUP OF 22 STUDENTS WAS ADJOURNED BECAUSE THE STUDENTS PROTESTED ABOUT THEIR MANACLES AND SOME OF THEM ATTEMPTED TO WALK FROM THE COURTROOM ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEIR TRIAL WAS UNCONSTITUTIONAL. THE MYONDONG GROUP IS MADE UP OF STUDENTS PREDOMINANTLY FROM SNU AND KOREA UNIVERSITIES BUT ALSO INCLUDING STUDENTS FROM OTHER CAMPUSES WHO GATHERED AT MYONDONG CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL ALLEGEDLY TO PLOT ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY. KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCES DO ADMIT THAT STUDENTS DID USE RELIGIOUS MEETINGS AS OPPORTUNITIES TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION AND THAT SOME OF THE STUDENTS ENGAGED IN ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS. ALL 22 STUDENTS WERE ARRESTED FOLLOWING MAY 22 DEMONSTRATIONS

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AT SNU AND HAVE BEEN IN PRISON SINCE THAT TIME.

3. EMBASSY LOCAL POLITICAL ANALYST WHO ATTENDED SECOND TRIAL SESSION OF STUDENTS PROVIDED FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE NOVEMBER 24: AT 10:00 A.M. 22 STUDENTS ARRIVED AT COURTROOM TO SHOUTS OF WELCOME FROM APPROXIMATELY 200 RELATIVES AND FRIENDS IN COURTROOM. 30 POLICE SURROUNDED STUDENTS WHILE THEY WERE FREED FROM THEIR ROPES AND MANACLES. JUDGES THEN PROCEEDED WITH QUESTIONING. FIRST FOUR STUDENTS DENIED THEY HAD KNOWINGLY PARTICIPATED IN ANTI-EM-9 ACTIVITIES. BEGINNING WITH THE FIFTH STUDENT AND PROCEEDING ONE BY ONE, NEXT TEN STUDENTS AROSE DENOUNCED THE TRIAL AND REFUSED TO RESPOND TO THE QUESTIONING BY PROSECUTOR OR JUDGE. INSTEAD, THESE STUDENTS INSISTED ON MAKING STATEMENTS OF THEIR OWN CLARIFYING THEIR POSITIONS ON THE WHOLE AFFAIR. FOR EXAMPLE, NUMBER 9 SAID "WE HAVE BEEN PLACED UNDER ARREST FOR SIX MONTHS AND STILL ARE DENIED ANY OPPORTUNITY TO STATE OUR POSITIONS. I DO NOT CONSENT TO THIS TRIAL PROCEEDING. PROCLAMATION OF EM-9 WAS A VERY SERIOUS ABUSE OF PRESIDENTIAL POWER FOR WHICH THE PRESIDENT SHOULD BE IMPEACHED. I SHALL REFUSE TO ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS." AGAIN STUDENT NUMBER SIX, "I REFUSE TO RECOGNIZE THE YUSHIN CONSTITUTION AND EM-9 AND I AM CONVINCED THAT BOYCOTTING THIS TRIAL IS THE ONLY COURSE OPEN TO ME AT THIS TIME TO RESIST THE YUSHIN CONSTITUTION. UNDER THE YUSHIN CONSTITUTION THERE IS NO INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY AND IN THIS RESPECT, YOU JUDGES ARE IN THE SAME SHOES AS WE ARE. I REFUSE TO ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS. AS A CATHOLIC, I WOULD RATHER DIE THAN CHEAT MY CONSCIENCE."

4. WHEN STUDENT NUMBER 10 KEPT ON WITH HIS STATEMENT IN A LOUD VOICE DESPITE EFFORT OF JUDGES AND POLICE TO RETURN HIM TO HIS SEAT, THE PRESIDING JUDGE ABRUPTLY ADJOURNED THE SESSION WITHOUT ANNOUNCING DATE OF NEXT SESSION.

5. AFTER ADJOURNMENT, FRIENDS AND RELATIVES OF STUDENTS GATHERED OUTSIDE COURTROOM TO AWAIT THEIR EXIT. STUDENTS WERE THEN BOUND AND HANDCUFFED AND LED OUT BY PRISON POLICE. CROWD CHEERED, CLAPPED HANDS AND A GROUP OF LADIES SANG HYMNS. ACCORDING TO EMBASSY POLITICAL ANALYST STUDENTS SEEMED HEALTHY AND HIGH SPIRITED.

6. QUAKER HAM SOK-HON WAS SEEN AMONG COURTROOM AUDIENCE AS WERE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SEVERAL WESTERN AND KOREAN REPORTERS AND CAMERAMEN. KOREAN PAPERS HAVE NOT REPORTED TRIAL SESSION.
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